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The Kindergarten

Anne E. Allen

A Story of St. Valentine's Day

There is an old legend that runs in this wise:

A long, long time ago there lived in France a priest who was a friend and confidant of all children. They came to him with all their troubles, sure of his sympathy and interest, no matter how small their troubles seemed to be. Their prayers were told him, and they learned from him the form of their childish petitions. The fame of his gentleness and kindly interest spread far and near, and the children came to him in such numbers that he had no time to settle all their little difficulties and disputes.

Seeing this, and feeling sorry that any child should go away from him uncomforted, he asked them to write out all their little petitions and send them to him unsigned, and said that he would burn them and the smoke would carry the little message to its destination.

Sometimes these notes were messages of love and gratitude to their kind friend. After a while the good man died, and it became a custom for the little children to send tokens of love to each other on his birthday, February 14th.

They sent them unsigned, and to this day the same custom is observed.

The Best Valentine

"But where will any valentines come from, way out here in the country? The postman doesn't come, and then there are no children near enough to send me any. Oh, dear! I wish we were back where we used to live!" The tears were in little

Alice's eyes ready to fall as she stood by the window of her new country home.

Her father and mother had just moved from their town house out into the country, where they expected to live for a while. There were no houses near enough to see from the windows of this home, whereas in their town home they were to be seen from every window. And as Alice remembered her last St. Valentine's Day, when the door-bell kept her busy running to get the beautiful little messages left for her on the doorstep by loving friends, she grew sad and lonesome.

She was feeling very unhappy when her mother found her with her face pressed against the window-pane and saw the hot tears running down her cheeks.

"What can be the matter with my little girl," she said, as she folded Alice in her warm, loving arms. "Let me see if I cannot chase away some of these clouds. Look."

On the table near was a package, which Alice was told to open. The lonesomeness was soon forgotten, for in the package was a box filled with many beautiful papers, pictures, little pans of gilt and silver paints, a pair of scissors, some beautiful ribbon, and everything needed to make many valentines, enough for all the people Alice knew and many more, and envelopes, besides, to put them in. Together they set to work to make valentines, and each day before the day came to send them they worked making all sorts of shapes, sizes, and colors.

Alice was sure she had never seen such beautiful pictures as she found in that box. There were tiny babies just learning to

walk, and little white sheep and lambs; but the very prettiest ones of all, she thought, were the little white doves with letters in their bills.

When the last ones were finished, Alice began to wonder how she was to send them to so many people. When she asked her dear mother, she answered: "Ask father; perhaps he can help you."

Alice ran to him and asked him if he could help her.

"If you will get your warm coat, cap, and mittens on, and mother is willing," he said, "you shall go with me to the postoffice this morning to post them."

It did not take Alice long to get ready, and as far as she could see her mother from the carriage window she waved her hand back to her.

The postmaster lifted her up to the little hole just under the office window and let her drop all the valentines into the box herself.

She was truly a happy little girl, and went to bed that night feeling as if she had already had the happiest valentine time in all her life. While she slept, however, there was much hurrying to and fro through the house getting ready for little Alice the valentine she had wished for most all her life—but she heard nothing.

The next morning the sun was shining in on her bed before Alice was awake, and when it finally did awaken her the house seemed so still she wondered what could be the matter. She hurried around and dressed herself as best she could without help, then stole quietly downstairs, thinking she would surprise her father and mother. When she pushed open the dining-room door and peeped in she held her breath, then ran quickly to her father, who sat by the fire, and jumping up in his lap, cried:

"Father! does it belong to us?"

"Yes, Alice; how do you like him?" answered her father, as he picked up a little white bundle from the nurse's lap and showed Alice the tiny red face within. "He is your valentine."

Here was the very little brother she had wanted for so long!

Tears of joy were in her eyes now, and when the baby boy was laid in her lap she said:

"This is the happiest Valentine Day I have ever had."

ANNE ELIZABETH ALLEN.

Valentines

No. 1. Two pieces of water-color paper 4x5 inches, cut into pansy shape and tied together. The lower one has a picture in the center, and is touched around the edges with gold paint. The upper one is painted as a pansy, and the petals are divided by gilt lines.

No. 2. Water-color paper 8x4 inches, cut into heart shape, so that one heart divides down the center to fold over the other one, on which is pasted a picture. Both hearts are gilded round the edges.

No. 3. Water-color paper 7x4 inches, folded as a screen, with a fruit picture on each side, and the folds and edges (with the exception of the lower one) gilded.

No. 4. Square of white bristol-board 4x4; red and green 4-inch squares of paper with two edges folded to center over a picture. The corners of the folds are turned back and fastened by tiny flowers.

No. 5. Four-inch circle of heavy paper or light bristol-board covered with circle of blue paper. Mounted on this are circles of orange and yellow paper, the opposite sides folded together to the center over a picture.

No. 6. Light gray 4-inch circle pasted on another circle of heavy paper or light bristol-board. On this is mounted a five-pointed star of blue paper with a calendar pasted in the center.

No. 7. Water-color paper 8x5, scalloped and folded as shown. The folds are gilded round the edge and fold over a square of pink paper cut in design and mounted flat on the white paper.

No. 8. A 4-inch square of red paper folded